

REMARKS

In the above referenced office action, claims 3 and 12 – 20 were rejected under 35 USC 112, as the Examiner was unclear as to how the flexible protection element was adapted to fold around the releasable connection member. Applicant respectfully asserts that the above amendments have obviated the rejection.

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Turk. Applicant respectfully traverses, and asserts that the claims as amended are not anticipated by the reference. The amended claims have been clarified to reflect that the flexible protection element wraps around an edge of the leg hole of the garment that is formed by the releasable connection. That is, where the releasable connection comes together and defines a portion of a leg hole, there will be an uncomfortable edge. The flexible protection element wraps around this edge and acts as a barrier between the wearer's skin and the uncomfortable edge portion of the leg hole. This is shown, as an example, in Figures 3 and 5 of the present application.

Turk teaches a bifurcated releasable connection; that is, two portions of a hook and loop fastener (24, 26) sandwich a third portion (22). The portions of the edges of the leg holes defined by this bifurcated connection remain exposed. Thus, Turk fails to teach a flexible protection element that wraps around this portion of the leg hole(s) as set forth in the claims. As such, the reference fails to anticipate the claims.

Further, there would be no teaching or suggestion to modify the reference. The traditional hook and loop configuration illustrated in Figure 1 of Turk provides the same level of comfort barrier that the configuration of Figures 2 and 3. The difference is that the bifurcated configuration provides twice as much adhesion strength as the configuration of Figure 1. Accordingly, the reference is not providing comfort barriers nor is it teaching or providing additional components that are provided to selectively cover edges created by joining the components together.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully asserts that the pending claims are in condition for allowance and notice of the same is respectfully requested. Should any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned. No additional fee are believed due at this time; however, the office is authorized to charge any fees actually due and credit any overpayment to deposit account 50-4439.

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Respectfully submitted,
Ehmsen

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